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Portland, OR 97266

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U.S. EPA
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I have lived in Portland my whole life, all fifty-nine years. The EPA plan for cleaning up the Willamette River is riddled with flaws. For one thing, it's based entirely on out-of-date information and ignores the fact that the river is flushing itself out all the time. Spending a billion dollars to dredge up toxic materials the river has already dealt with is outrageous, even compared to a lot of other government waste. If we are going to clean a river it should be the Columbia River, which is polluted with massive amounts of mercury, not to mention the nuclear waste coming from Hanford. We have more important things to worry about than the Willamette, which is already recovering through natural methods.

It would also be much better spent reducing taxes, but of course, the opposite is going to happen. That billion dollars is going to come right out of the pockets of Portland taxpayers. My wife and I can't afford to pay any more in taxes or utilities. Also, shutting down the river for perpetual construction will force businesses on the waterfront to close. That area is pretty rundown as it is, but this will just kill it. The whole plan should be scrapped and replaced with the one recommended by the Army Corps of Engineers: allow the river to clean itself as much as possible, and dredge only when and where you must. That plan won't cost anything in comparison, and it won't destroy the local economy.

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